

Neighborhood Kids. This two-part program is bringing the community together to help keep children safe—and to help recover them if they should ever be lost or taken.

Under the WINK Program, safe houses are being established across the city. These are homes and businesses, screened by the Weirton police, that volunteer to open their doors to children who are lost, hurt or threatened. The goal is to eventually have one on every block.

The approved safe houses are given a logo sign to post in their windows. They also are given information on helping children in danger. Children are told about the program in school, and parents are encouraged to show them where safe houses can be found in the neighborhood.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of vigilance and communication is a good way to protect our children. But sometimes, no matter how careful the precautions, young people are lost or missing. That is why the second part of this program is vitally important as well.

In addition to the safe houses, WINK has established a child identification program. It sponsors free registration events across the community. Parents bring in their children for digital photos, for fingerprints or footprints, and for a DNA mouth swab. All of these items—these key identification tools—are given to parents to take home, and keep close at hand.

Experts tell us that when a child is missing, an immediate response is the best response. It helps to increase the odds of a successful recovery. Thanks to the child I.D. program, parents have up-to-date information ready to give to police should the unthinkable happen.

Mr. Speaker, the safety of children is a concern that we all share. Today, I am pleased to salute a special group of people who truly take this concern to heart, and have channeled it into real community action. I ask the House to join me in recognizing the caring volunteers who are behind Weirton's watching its neighborhood kids.

A BILL TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE MAGNUSON-STEVENSON FISHERY CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT AND TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE BERING SEA CRAB RATIONALIZATION PROGRAM

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to make a number of changes to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. I believe there are three areas of the current Act that need to be changed. While the language I am proposing may not be the best way to address these concerns, I would like these proposed changes to spark a debate in the coming months.

In addition, I am including language to amend the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab rationalization program to address what I believe was an oversight in the plan. I believe this plan to rationalize the Bering Sea crab fishery is a living plan which will continue to be modified as changes are needed. I believe

that the safety issues of this fishery necessitate some action, and I don't believe that no action is an option. Congress asked the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to give the Congress a proposal and they did so. We have studied this fishery for too long without doing something to make it safer. Having said that, I also believe that the plan to rationalize this important fishery needs to be dynamic and we need to be able to make adjustments as we see how the plan works. Everyone involved in this debate has good intentions, but we need to be mindful that good intentions sometimes cause unintended consequences. We need to watch the implementation of the plan very carefully.

Finally, I am asking the Secretary of State to determine whether the retired U.S. staff of two international fisheries commissions who worked in Canada were unduly harmed by exchange rates and to what extent their retirement packages have suffered as a result of the exchange rate.

THE AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 21, 2003

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, partisan divisions are common in the Congress, but a few issues regularly escape those boundaries. International trade typically is one of them. Although the votes that gave President Bush Trade Promotion Authority confirm that even international trade can be an intensely polarizing issue, it frequently garners support across the political spectrum.

I first traveled to Africa in 1961 with Operation Crossroads to build a school in Ghana. Africa in the '60s underwent a vibrant surge of optimism as independence from colonial rule spread throughout the continent. My experience in Ghana changed my view of the world, and many Members of Congress have had experiences similar to mine. Many Members also believe, as I do, that when the United States opens its markets to poor countries, we extend an enormous opportunity to create jobs and raise living standards, and also provide greater value to American consumers. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), signed into law by President Clinton in 2000, underscores the common goals that Republicans and Democrats can share.

By any measure, AGOA is a resounding success. It is spurring economic growth and bolstering economic reforms. It is fostering stronger ties between sub-Saharan Africa and the United States, and it is reaffirming Africans' conviction that they can compete in any market.

AGOA, which provides temporary benefits, requires periodic review by the Congress to assess its effectiveness. It was designed this way in part because policy makers, like myself, did not know the precise recipe to attract the type of investment in sub-Saharan Africa we were seeking. We made a few good guesses in this regard, but we probably missed the mark in other areas.

We guessed right when we decided that we should provide sub-Saharan Africa greater access to the U.S. textile and apparel market.

Over the last three years, tens of thousands of jobs were created in this industry, thanks to AGOA benefits. Expiring next year, however, is the provision in AGOA that allows Africa's poorest countries to buy fabric outside the region—where it is inexpensive and high in quality—to create finished apparel products for export to the U.S.

Today, I join several of my colleagues, like Representatives ED ROYCE, AMO HOUGHTON and CHARLES RANGEL, to introduce legislation to extend AGOA and spread its benefits to other sectors of sub-Saharan Africa's economy. The AGOA III Act, H.R. 3572, marks the beginning of another bi-partisan effort to develop a plan to improve U.S.-Africa trade.

When my colleagues and I set out to write this bill, we saw the need to address four key issues. First, the third-country fabric provision available to Africa's poorest countries through AGOA expires at the end of next year, at the very same time as worldwide quotas on apparel disappear due to the WTO's Multi Fiber agreement. Third-country fabric must be extended to allow sub-Saharan Africa to participate in a market dominated by the Asian giants. There will be robust debate about how long Congress should extend this provision. We suggest in the AGOA III Act that these benefits should last as long as four years.

Second, the United States needs to provide technical assistance to African farmers to enable them to export their products to America. To do this, the AGOA III Act places dozens of American agricultural experts throughout sub-Saharan Africa to work with farmers and their governments.

Third, the biggest barrier to investment in sub-Saharan Africa is the lack of infrastructure. But building roads, ports, energy grids, telecommunication and water systems solely to increase trade flows is simply not feasible. It is the "chicken or the egg" dilemma. We cannot increase trade flows without adequate infrastructure, yet why build infrastructure if trade capacity is not at a level that requires it? We must find ways to develop and maintain new infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa as trade capacity improves. One way we can do this is by fostering sustainable ecotourism in sub-Saharan Africa. This industry is expected to grow 30 percent over the next decade. We can help sub-Saharan Africa position itself to take advantage of this because the region enjoys an international comparative advantage with its extensive protected areas that host a variety of ecosystems and cultures. National parks and reserves in sub-Saharan Africa can become a basis for regional development, involving the communities living within and adjacent to them. The infrastructure used to support an ecotourism industry can also be used to increase trade flow. There are several initiatives in the AGOA III Act that seek to help sub-Saharan Africa develop its infrastructure, in part by helping build a viable ecotourism industry.

Fourth, we must address AIDS, which is not just a health crisis. AIDS is an economic catastrophe. In the 1990s, AIDS reduced Africa's per capita annual growth by nearly 1 percent. In the most heavily affected countries, 2 percentage points will be sliced off per capita growth in coming years. This means that after two decades, many economies in sub-Saharan Africa will be about 20–40 percent smaller than they would have been without AIDS. That is an enormous decline that no trade policy